

will be new Medicare choices, and all of these new choices will offer prescription drugs. Medicare plans will compete by offering better service and lower premiums. Medicare will respond better to the needs of seniors and, especially, low income seniors and seniors with high medical bills. And Medicare will be put on sound financial footing.

These are principles which will strengthen one of our Nation's most sacred obligations, the health of our senior citizens. We'll protect seniors now, offering exciting new services and more choices to seniors in the future, and guarantee prescription drug coverage. And we will do it without overtaxing our children and our grandchildren.

Medicine is constantly improving. Medicare must keep pace. That's my administration's commitment today and its exciting new vision for health care in America.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:51 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

## **Proclamation 7455—Captive Nations Week, 2001**

*July 12, 2001*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

### **A Proclamation**

The 21st century must become the "Century of Democracy." Democracy and freedom have taken root across the globe, and the United States will continue to stand for greater consolidation of pluralism and religious freedom, wider access to information, and respect for human rights and for the rule of law. Our Nation and many of our allies share this vision for the world. In the words of President Ronald Reagan, "For the sake of peace and justice, let us move toward a world in which all people are at last free to determine their own destiny."

During the 20th century, dictators, monarchs, and colonialism gave way to democracy through ballot boxes, pressure from citizens, and negotiated settlements to conflicts. However, freedom and liberty remained out of reach for many. In 1959, the Congress out-

mulgated a Joint Resolution authorizing and requesting the President to declare the third week of July as Captive Nations Week and to continue this annual statement "until such time as freedom and independence shall have been achieved for all the captive nations of the world."

Worldwide, many nations have successfully made transitions to democracy since President Eisenhower signed the Captive Nations Resolution. These democracies, whether nascent or consolidated, are found in areas that the great General and 34th President could have barely imagined would find freedom before the 20th century closed.

In spite of the proliferation of democracies over the past century, many people across the globe are held captive by their governments. More than a decade after the Berlin Wall fell, more than 2 billion people still live under authoritarian regimes. America must remain vigilant in our support of those living under authoritarianism. There remain people in Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia who do not enjoy the right to choose their own governments and to hold those governments accountable.

Americans and the 3 billion others across the globe living in democracies desire the same freedoms for the remaining 42 percent of the world's population who live without them. But as long as governments like those in Afghanistan, Burma, Cuba, Iraq, and Sudan exist, freedom is not accessible to all. Greater access to robust marketplaces of ideas, as well as freedom of worship and expression, will empower those living in closed societies. Strong and transparent judicial systems and respect for human rights and the rule of law also serve as necessary foundations for democracy.

To promote the development of democratic practices worldwide, I reaffirm America's support for freedom, justice, and pluralism. I have asked my Administration to examine our programs to support democracy and human rights movements closely and to ensure that these programs advance American policy. In addition, I want to make certain that our annual State Department

human rights, trafficking in persons, and religious freedom reports are integrated into American foreign policy.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week in July of each year as "Captive Nations Week."

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 15–21, 2001, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to reaffirm their devotion to the aspirations of all peoples for liberty, justice, and self-determination.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 16, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 13, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 17.

### **Remarks at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland**

*July 13, 2001*

Thank you very much. Dr. Miller, it's my honor to be here in the number one hospital in the United States to talk about an incredibly important issue. And that's Medicare, and how to make sure it's relevant as we head into the 21st century.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come. I'm honored to be traveling today with Tommy Thompson. I knew Tommy as a Governor. I knew he'd be a great Secretary of Health and Human Services, and he's proved me right. I appreciate you being here, Tommy.

I want to thank Dr. Brody. I want to thank Mr. Peterson. I want to thank Congressman Cummings and Congressman Ehrlich for being here, as well. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for coming. I appreciate the base-

ball bat with Cal Ripken's signature on it. [Laughter]

I am so proud of the health care system of America. We're the best in the world. We've got the best docs in the world. We've got the best research in the world. We've got the best hospitals in the world. And I intend to keep it that way. It's really important that our health care be responsive and innovative and rewarding.

And there are some bills coming up in front of Congress now that will help determine the course of medicine. One is called the Patients' Bill of Rights. It's really important that we not have our system laden down by unnecessary lawsuits, that when we pass legislation, we keep patients in mind and make sure patients have direct access to specialists and make sure patients have the capacity to take their complaints to an independent review organization so that the complaint can be remedied quickly, not held up in a court of law.

I think we'll get a pretty good piece of legislation out. I certainly hope so, because it's part of a reform process, all aimed at making our health care system focus on patients and their relationship with doctors.

The big issue also confronting us is Medicare. The other day in the Rose Garden I laid out a Medicare set of guidelines, and I'm going to reiterate those here today. But I started off my talk by reminding people that another Texas President, Lyndon Johnson, started Medicare. And he presented former President Harry Truman with the first Medicare card, as he outlined the dream of Medicare.

And the truth of the matter is, Medicare has met the goals of America. Seniors are better off as a result of Medicare. But the problem with Medicare is, medicine changes, and Medicare has not. Medicine in the United States is changing dramatically, and I witnessed firsthand some of the fascinating technologies taking place in your eye clinic here and incredibly important changes when it comes to kidney transplants.

And yet, oftentimes, as innovation occurs in the health care area, Medicare is stuck in the past. It won't change, because it's too bureaucratic. The other day I said, you know, 1965 is when the program started, and even